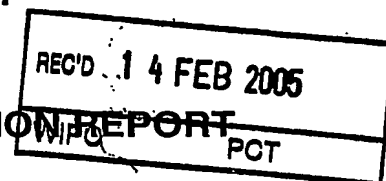


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT (PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)



Applicant's or agent's file reference MEW1633E	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/PEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/JP 03/07526	International filing date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 13.06.2003	Priority date (<i>day/month/year</i>) 13.06.2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC A61N7/00		
Applicant MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC WORKS, LTD. et Al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.
- ☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).
- These annexes consist of a total of sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
- I ☒ Basis of the opinion
 - II ☐ Priority
 - III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
 - V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI ☐ Certain documents cited
 - VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 29.04.2004	Date of completion of this report 15.02.2005
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority: European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized Officer Mayer-Martenson, E Telephone No. +31 70 340-4401

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/JP 03/07526**

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

1-23 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-16 as originally filed

Drawings, Sheets

1/10-10/10 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
☐ the claims, Nos.:
☐ the drawings, sheets:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. **PCT/JP 03/07526**

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-16
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-16
	No: Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-16
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/JP 03/07526

Re Item V

**Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability;
citations and explanations supporting such statement**

Reference is made to the following document:

D1: US-B1-6 183 426 (ABE HIDEAKI ET AL) 6 February 2001 (2001-02-06)

V.1 Claim 1

The document D1 is regarded as being the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claim 1, and shows (the references in parentheses applying to this document):

an ultrasound applying skin care device comprising:

a housing (10) provided with an applicator head

a driver circuit (20);

the head comprising:

a vibrator element (11),

a horn (12) carrying the vibrator, both forming a vibration mass with a first impedance when loaded by contact with skin and a second impedance when unloaded,

a load detecting circuit (40) providing a load detection signal upon seeing the first impedance and

a control circuit (80) which limits or stops the electric pulse when the load detection signal is not received within a predetermined time period (cf. abstract; fig.1)

The subject-matter of claim 1 differs from this known device in that the vibration mass also comprises a structure to restrain vibrations at a center portion to reduce parasitic resonance for differentiating the first impedance from the second impedance.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore new (Article 33(2) PCT).

The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as clearly distinguishing the loaded and unloaded impedance.

The solution to this problem proposed in claim 1 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:

D1 neither discloses nor fairly suggests a structure for restraining the vibrations at a center portion.

No other document of the same or neighbouring technical field discloses such a structure to more clearly distinguish two different impedances. Therefore the subject matter of claim 1 is also inventive.

V.2 Dependent claims

Claims 2-16 are dependent on claim 1 and as such also meet the requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty and inventive step.